

**Before the
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20554**

In the Matter of)	
)	
)	PS Docket No. 13-87
Proposed Amendments to the Service Rules)	
Governing Public Safety Narrowband Operations in)	WT Docket No. 96-86
the 769-775/799-805 MHz Bands)	

CITY OF NEW YORK RESPONSE TO REQUEST FOR COMMENT

The New York City Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications “DoITT”) respectfully submits comments on whether to extend or eliminate the December 31, 2016 narrowbanding deadline for 700 MHz (769-775 MHz and 799-805 MHz) public safety narrowband licensees to transition from 12.5 kilohertz to 6.25 kilohertz channel bandwidth. The City’s specific position is that this unfunded requirement to narrowband to 6.25 kilohertz should be eliminated.

DoITT manages one of the City's largest radio user groups via its 800-MHz Trunked Radio Network (856 to 860-MHz). This network supports both day-to-day and emergency communications for over 13,000 radios. The network contains over 200 individual talk groups; the principal public safety talk group being the NYC Office of Emergency Management’s “ALERT” channel. Daily roll calls are conducted by OEM Watch Command amongst 60 local, state, federal, neighboring public safety agencies and associated jurisdictions, and critical infrastructure/key resource subscribers to ensure that all lines of communication are open; that equipment remains operational; and that all network subscribers are prepared for immediate utilization should an emergency arise.

Based on the ALERT channel concept, a distinct healthcare and medical facility talk group was created on the network to make interoperability possible among the OEM Health Response Unit—a consortium of 87 facilities. This specialized talk group facilitates the real-time exchange of information concerning the availability of medical services, and enhances the City’s overall preparedness level. Additionally, 55 commissioners from the City’s mayoral agencies monitor a supplementary ALERT talk group, so that at the request of the Mayor, agency commissioners are quickly reached to disseminate information to executive staff and response teams.

Over the past several years, since 700 MHz (769-775 MHz and 799-805 MHz) narrowband spectrum has become available in the New York metropolitan area via the Regional Planning Committee (RPC) process, the City has licensed numerous frequencies throughout the five counties of New York City and has expanded the its 800 MHz Trunked System to include the new channels. As part of this expansion, DoITT has implemented a FDMA Project 25 (P25) Phase 1 trunking core infrastructure in the 12.5 kHz mode of operation per the newly acquired frequencies thereby enabling the City to not only utilize the spectrum immediately but to also migrate its entire 800 MHz System onto this fully supported standards based platform while increasing capacity, improving coverage, and expand interoperability between agencies and neighboring jurisdictions.

The City submits that the Commission’s current mandate to narrowband to TDMA/6.25 is untenable for the following reasons.

1. Current fiscal conditions make moving directly to 6.25 kHz economically unfeasible. The City concludes that any transition to 6.25 kHz narrowbanding will require transitioning to a TDMA trunked platform, which has not been proven as a reliable mode of public safety communications within the City of New York. The costs and risks associated with TDMA/6.25 transitioning place unreasonable burdens on the City. The City’s current 12.5 kHz/FDMA systems are effectively functioning. Upgrading these systems would require significant trunking hardware implementation and labor extensive software upgrades to all radio hardware.

2. This level of migration would seriously impact interoperability between agencies, and would also impact the City's interoperability capabilities with neighboring jurisdictions. The City's original 700 MHz deployment efforts contemplated that the 12.5 kHz systems implemented would have a life cycle of 10-15 years. The capital investment and operating expenses incurred by the city to deploy and operate FDMA/12.5 kHz and FDMA/25 kHz systems involved millions of dollars and entailed extensive planning, testing, and large scale equipment procurement. Transitioning to 6.25 kHz/TDMA trunking technology requires significant upgrades and requires similar expenditures. To this extent, forcing a migration to 6.25 kHz requires that DoITT take a holistic view of not only its 700 MHz channels but also its 800 MHz platform as well to ensure that all components are compatible, interoperable and can supported over the next ten years. The deadline of December 31, 2016 provides insufficient time for any level of reasoned planning and migration.
3. Even if the City could finance TDMA/6.25 kHz narrowbanding, it must evaluate issues concerning the quality of newly standardized TDMA/6.25 kHz voice transmissions. With a population of over 8 million, the City is among the largest and most densely populated in the country. The City is also a vital hub for over 30 million people, many of whom rely on the City's airports, highways, and public transportation systems. As such, the public safety community, hospitals and the transportation agencies, charged with keeping the community, its visitors and its commuters safe must have proven public safety communications substructure available to them at all times. Unproven technologies simply cannot be deployed without endangering the City, its public safety workers and the citizenry at large.

Taken together it is clear that transitioning poses an improper financial burden on the City while offering few benefits. Today, 6.25/TDMA technologies have not been proven within the City's urban environment which introduces significant risk. It is the City's position that substantial precautions must be taken before implementing such systems. To ensure that the City does not jeopardize, or detrimentally impact, the safety and well-being of the City's residents, businesses, and visitors, the City contends that it would not be in the public interest to require a December

31, 2016 6.25 kHz narrowband mandate for 700 MHz (769-775 MHz and 799-805 MHz) public safety licensees. Rather, the City urges the Commission to eliminate the narrowband mandate altogether.

Respectfully submitted

Date: June 18, 2013

/s/

Steven Harte

Associate Commissioner, Wireless Technologies

New York City Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications

(NYCDoITT)